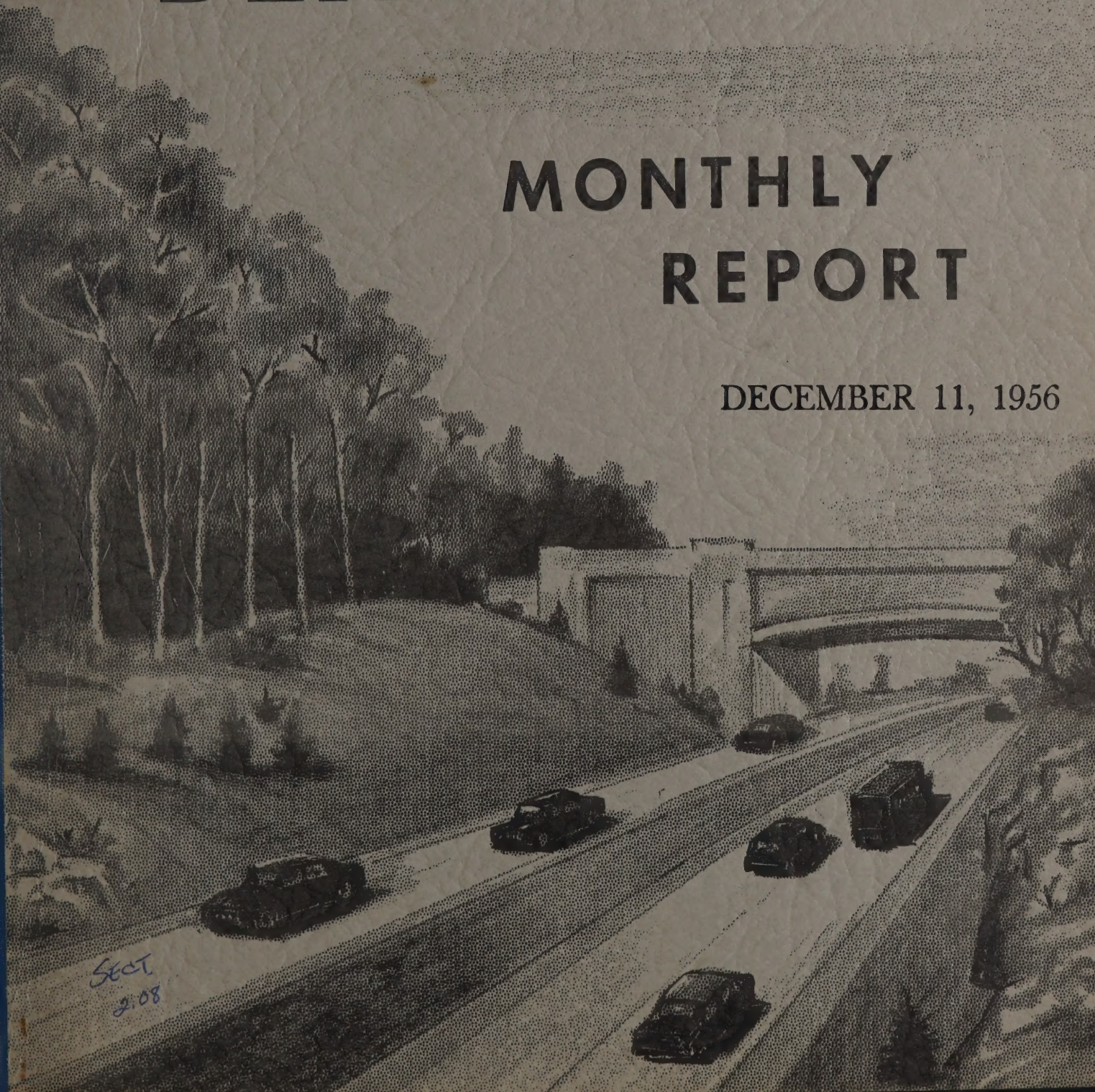


STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

MONTHLY REPORT

DECEMBER 11, 1956



SECT
2.08

EXCESS PARCELS

This Thursday, December 13, we will take the initial step in disposing of excess parcels of land that the Department has accumulated over the past 40 years by holding a public auction at which nearly 200 such parcels will be offered.

To insure that the Department be above criticism in the handling of this matter, we inserted a detailed advertisement in one newspaper in each of the 21 counties, although it is our understanding such action is not obligatory. In addition, we placed with each County Board of Realtors sufficient mimeographed copies of the advertisement to furnish each of their members with one; sent copies to each county Senator and to each of the 21 county officials in charge of real estate records; and looked back through our files for the past 5 years and sent copies of the list of parcels to anyone who had indicated interest within that period in any of the items being offered.

Subsequently we received hundreds of telephone calls, letters and personal visits from people who noticed the advertisement and wanted further information.

To all we have explained that the purpose of the sale is to put these properties back into economic circulation and that in so doing we are neither interested in "giving anything away" nor in attempting to "make a fortune" on the transactions.

EXCESS PARCELS, cont'd

All parcels have been screened carefully to insure we are not disposing of something that we can reasonably expect to use later on. On the other hand, we are not considering retention where the possible future need is questionable.

Early indications of interest might warrant an optimistic outlook on the outcome.

BERGEN-PASSAIC EXPRESSWAY

On Tuesday, December 4, we attended morning and afternoon meetings in Paterson on the Bergen-Passaic Expressway. The morning meeting was held by the Forward Paterson Committee and was attended by Senator Shershin, Mayor O'Byrne, Assemblyman Smith, Assemblywoman Newton, members of the Board of Freeholders, and Chamber of Commerce officials. Others in attendance included officials of West Paterson, Totowa, and Wayne Township.

As a result of this meeting we were able to obtain complete acceptance of our line through Paterson and will be able to proceed with no opposition from city officials, business interests, or the local papers.

This is indeed a most agreeable situation and one which gives us unusual satisfaction.

In West Paterson, our engineers are continuing to explore suggestions made by the Borough to arrive at a feasible and mutually acceptable line. Totowa

BERGEN-PASSAIC EXPRESSWAY, cont'd

also has certain objections to the route which we will try to iron out at a meeting on December 12.

Wayne Township has OK'd our line and publicly thanked us for our consideration of their suggestions.

In the afternoon we met with Mayor O'Byrne, the Senator, and the Paterson Planning Board. At this meeting we were acquainted with the Board's overall planning for the city which included, among other items, the extension of Route 20 to connect with Route 208 and the extension of Route 21 from Newark to Paterson.

This meeting also resulted in complete agreement with our Expressway alignment and again we were assured of complete cooperation.

Of particular interest is the public statement of Mayor O'Byrne as follows:

"I wish to thank Commissioner Palmer for the patience shown during the trying days that led to this (agreement). - - - - We are going along with this as best for Paterson, doing as good a job as we can for the future. I believe the future will show we have taken the right course."

On November 21, 1956, Senator Jones released what was purported to be "his" line for the Bergen-Passaic Expressway. In reality, this line was a combination of the alternate alignments previously submitted by our engineers and discussed with the various municipalities. No new elements were introduced.

BERGEN-PASSAIC EXPRESSWAY, cont'd

While this fact, of course, was evident to the officials of affected municipalities, we believe that the announcement by the Senator did have the effect of bestowing official sanction. As such, it has given us a line acceptable to the majority of people and one we can live with since we already had proposed it as an alternate.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

At the Governor's Safety Conference we took full opportunity of the occasion to stress our constant efforts to build safety into our more heavily traveled and antiquated highways. Along this line we reviewed more than 21 avenues we are taking to accomplish the desired end, including center island barrier construction, up-grade creeper lanes, overpass and "jug handle" construction, closing island openings, widening roadways and a host of other items.

On the subject of island closings, we stressed the fact that this often is not a simple procedure in that construction of an overpass is usually required. A good illustration of this is to be found in the opening Monday, December 3, of a new overpass of Route 22 in North Plainfield, Somerset County. Although it is our aim to close all center island openings along this stretch of heavily traveled highway, the construction, which cost in excess of \$850,000, allowed our closing off but one dangerous intersection and three center island openings.

HIGHWAY SAFETY, cont'd

However costly, each of these accomplishments is a step in the right direction and we intend to follow through in this type of security improvement as rapidly as our financial capabilities permit.

ENGINEERING PERSONNEL

Our program of visiting with engineering students at the various educational institutions in order to put before them what we can offer in the way of a career is continuing satisfactorily.

Our people who have been engaged in this work have had the opportunity to pretty well size up the over-all engineering recruitment picture as it changes from month to month and have formed some definite conclusions that are agreed with generally by the college administrators with whom they have had contact.

Chief among these conclusions is that publicity of the nationwide road program has increased interest in highway engineering. However, our present maximum starting rate of \$365 a month is too low. If we manage to boost it by about \$30 a month we can expect to do much better. We are exploring this with Civil Service.

One of our latest efforts resulted in agreements with Detroit University and Drexel Institute whereby we are attracting several young men who will work three months with the Department and attend college for three months. Although this will not immediately fill any gaps in trained and experienced

ENGINEERING PERSONNEL, cont'd

personnel, it will keep us supplied with lower echelon engineers. Upon their graduation, we hope that they will lean heavily towards joining our forces permanently by reason of their acquaintance with our organization and our methods.

PULASKI SKYWAY

Resurfacing of the Pulaski Skyway was completed subsequent to our last report and we have received some very fine notices from the newspapers of that area concerning the job we did. We also were commended by the A. A. A. For the purpose of furnishing a little more detail, a copy of the news release we sent out at the time is made a part of this report.

The centerline barrier work on the Skyway is proceeding satisfactorily and it is going up at the rate of about 1000 lineal feet a day. As of December 7 there was approximately 4000 feet of barrier installed and another 9000 feet to go. Our engineers estimate that another three weeks should complete the job.

Traffic-wise, the project has been without unfavorable incident either in the way of accidents or traffic tie-ups. We feel this is due mainly to our requiring the contractor to match his operation with the off-peak traffic periods. Usually he can get started shortly after 9 a. m. and can continue until 3:30 or 4 in the afternoon.

ENCROACHMENT SURVEY

This continuing project aimed at removing dangerous and unsightly encroachments, mainly buildings and signs, from within our rights of way has been proceeding for several months now and is showing some appreciable results.

As of last week our action in notifying over 2500 owners of record has resulted in removal of 1,896 encroachments. The balance is split two ways:

1. In the process of "being removed" or "arranging for removal".
2. People who have not responded to our initial notifications.
These are being followed up.

SNOW REMOVAL

Although there has been no need for a statewide operation as of this writing, our forces have been called out during two recent week-ends to spread abrasive and do some light plowing.

The deployment of our equipment, however, has been completed and this year we will be able to put 743 operating units into action as compared to 701 last year. In this group are 25 salt spreaders and we have hopes of these becoming the nucleus of a much larger number that would do much toward not only taking care of ice and densely packed snow more thoroughly, but may completely eliminate the need for spreading and later removing thousands of tons of abrasives from our highway each year. These abrasives include sand, cinders, slag, and stone chips that are

SNOW REMOVAL, cont'd

spread to provide temporary traction on ice or compacted snow.

Our new two-way radio system will, without question, be an improvement of our ability to cope with the winter emergency situation in that we will have far greater maneuverability of equipment. Our news release concerning snow and ice control is included and contains further details.

A. A. S. H. O. CONVENTION

The 42nd Annual Meeting of the American Association of State Highway Officials was held in Atlantic City, November 27th to 30th. As the host state, we carried out much of the arrangements, including reservations, registrations, tours, publicity, etc., in a manner satisfactory to the Association.

The meeting afforded an excellent opportunity to discuss our problems with top officials of the U. S. Bureau of Public Roads and I believe we made substantial progress in several respects - particularly in respect to the possibility of obtaining interstate status for the Essex East-West Freeway.

At the opening session the Highway Commissioner read Governor Meyner's address of welcome and subsequent speech which outlined the State's highway needs and made a plea that the program might proceed on a non-partisan basis. This was well received and New Jersey newspapers played up this angle to a marked degree.

A. A. S. H. O. CONVENTION, cont'd

The success of the Convention is best attested by the enthusiasm of the Executive Committee who expressed a desire to return to New Jersey in the very near future. They were 1,268 strong.

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Trenton, Nov. 15.- The State Highway Department today announced that tests made this week by its Engineering Research Bureau have indicated conclusively that the resurfaced Pulaski Skyway "has a very satisfactory degree of skid resistance."

Application of the new synthetic rock asphalt Skyway surface was begun October 24 and the main roadway operations completed on Nov. 6. The painting of new traffic lane markings early this week marked completion of the overall project.

Careful planning by the Department resulted in the job being completed ahead of schedule and without any serious delays to the 60,000 cars a day traffic of the facility. Excellent safety precautions paid off in producing a completed project under hazardous conditions without accidents involving either motorists or workmen.

Department employes on the project, however, reported noting a marked tendency for Skyway users to "step-on-the-gas" as soon as a newly completed portion was opened to them and the Department has advised the Hudson County police of this possible source of future accidents.

The new surface, which averages a half-inch thick, has excellent riding qualities due in a large part to "feathering" the machine laid pavement to a thin edge at each of the structure's expansion joints which had to be left unsurfaced in order that they could continue to function properly.

Tests performed by the Department's forces that were engaged in the resurfacing indicated good adhesion was made to both the previously placed tar "skin patch" and those portions of the original concrete Skyway surface that were exposed.

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PULASKI SKYWAY

A small center area of old surface was left untouched in order to present no obstacle in anchoring the steel centerline barrier - presently being erected under separate contract.

After completing the Skyway paving the Department resurfaced Tonnele Avenue traffic circle and a 300-foot portion of Route 1 to the south.

There too the operation was performed to eliminate poor riding qualities and surface slipperiness that had developed.

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RELEASE WEDNESDAY, P. M., NOV. 28.

Trenton, Nov. 28 - With the machinery of its snow and ice control program revised and reinforced, the State Highway Department announces that it is set to take on its annual battle with the winter elements.

Principal among the reinforcements which the Department anticipates as aiding in this work is a two-way radio communication system that will link field supervisors directly with the Department's central control headquarters in Trenton.

The radio net was established subsequent to last winter's snow and ice operations in order to serve the year 'round needs of the State agency. It will prove valuable in the shifting of snow removal and ice control equipment from sections where the battle is under control to hard pressed highways in other areas.

Prior to radio installation, the Trenton control center had to rely on incoming telephone calls from supervisors prior to issuing instructions. This winter these instructions will be given instantaneously to both area supervisors involved when the need is apparent.

The importance of ice control in the Department's operations has increased each year until now it represents about three-fifths of the total work. In view of this the Department will rely more this year on the use of chemicals in combating ice on the highways. In the past, use of chemicals in snow and ice control, principally the latter, was more or less incidental to the use of abrasives such as sand, slag and cinders.

Where the materials were stockpiled outdoors, a relatively small quantity of calcium chloride was added to each stockpile for the purpose of preventing freeze-ups of the abrasives if and when they became saturated with rain or melted snow.

This chemical was kept to a minimum in order to stave off what was felt to be potentially undesirable reactions with concrete road surfaces. Much scaling of concrete has been generally attributed to such chemical reaction.

Snow Removal Operations

However, with the development and use of new concrete mixtures in road paving, increased mileage of bituminous surfaces, and nationwide experiments in the use of sodium chloride (rock salt), fear of damage to many road surfaces by use of this chemical has been reduced.

The Department, therefore, in preparation for this year's ice control program, acquired 25 distributor units for spreading sodium chloride without abrasives. These units are detachable and will be mounted on tail gates of light and heavy duty trucks already equipped with snow plows each time the need for their use arises. They will become the nucleus of a much larger quantity of similar distributors if they prove that they and the sodium chloride can do the job in New Jersey.

It was pointed out, however, that the sodium chloride spreaders, for the time being, will constitute "reinforcements" in ice control and the "backbone" will remain abrasives mixed with calcium chloride.

In order that "conclusive" information on effectiveness of salt can be obtained, distribution of the spreader units has been made statewide, with concentrations higher in the metropolitan and mountainous areas.

The Department expects that the results obtained not only will improve control but eliminate the presently associated task - the Spring clean-up of thousands of tons of abrasives from the highways and drainage systems along the roads.

Additional snow and ice control mobile units that can be called out on a moment's notice have brought the Department's operating fleet to 743 plows, blowers, spreaders and loaders as compared to 701 units in last year.

Chemical Removal Operations

However, with the development of new chemical mixtures in road paving, increased mileage of highway surfaces, and nationwide expansion in the use of sodium chloride (rock salt), fear of damage to many road surfaces by use of this chemical has been reduced.

The Department, therefore, in preparation for this year's ice control program, acquired 25 distributor units for spreading sodium chloride without additives. These units are detachable and will be mounted on both types of light and heavy duty trucks already equipped with snow plows each with the need for their use arises. They will become the nucleus of a much larger quantity of similar distributors if they prove that they and the sodium chloride can do the job in New Jersey.

It was pointed out, however, that the sodium chloride spreaders, for the time being, will constitute "reinforcements" in ice control and the "backbone" will remain comprised of the sodium chloride.

In order that "economical" distribution and effectiveness of salt can be obtained, distribution of the spreader units has been state-wide, with concentrations higher in the metropolitan and mountain areas.

The Department expects that the results obtained not only will improve control but eliminate the presently associated task - the spring clean-up of thousands of tons of salt from the highways and drainage systems along the roads.

Additional snow and ice control mobile units that can be called out as a moment's notice have brought the Department's operating fleet to 700 plows, blowers, spreaders and loaders as compared to 700 units in last year.

